

## ANOTHER 1,000 FEET OF WOOKIEY HOLE

Tree roots will guide to surface entrance

WOOKIEY 9A was found where dozens of people have been before, but have passed it by. John Parker, diving last May, explored an opening that had been ignored before and climbed into a long well-decorated passage. At the beginning of December this was pushed by Brian Priddle to reveal a total of 1,000 ft of passage. There is a very fine chamber and calcite crystals six inches long formed by slow crystallisation from solution.

The passage rises to within 20 ft of the surface somewhere near Badger Hole in Ebbor Gorge and cannot have been blocked long as bat skeletons were found.

The surface entrance is being sought by analysis of root samples found in the cave and comparing them with those of trees on the surface.

- Peter Mathews.

## STUDY OF CAVE DEVELOPMENT PLANNED AT LEICESTER

A TWO DAY study of geomorphology and cave development has been arranged at Vaughan College Leicester on March 6/7 by the Cave Research Group. Details from the secretary.

## UNLUCKY FOR ONE

A THIRTEEN year-old Scout broke his leg in Rod's Pot in November and was rescued by MRO

## COTTAGE HUNT HOTS UP

SEVERAL possible properties for a new field hq have now been received and are now being investigated by the committee and cottage sub committee.

## SUCKER SOUGHT

IT HAS been decided that we have looked at the terminal sump of Upper Flood Swallet long enough. We have plans to hire a 2in diameter outlet pump unless a cheaper (!) offer comes along, comes along . . .

MUD IN YOUR EYE Hockey is muddier and more expensive than caving - Pete Mathews.

## POETS CORNER REVISITED

Poems, 'not the Alfie Collins sort'  
 Our Editor announced with glee.  
 The master winced, stopped and thought  
 And wrote what follows for all to see.  
 A man of classics, his writing mode  
 Far superior to a fleeting ode . . . . .

ON READING A VERSE OF THE EULOGY  
 'IN PRAISE OF LIMESTONE' BY  
 W.H. AUDEN IN THE MCG NEWSLETTER  
 FOR NOVEMBER 1970 IN WHICH IT WAS  
 DESCRIBED AS 'THE POETRY OF CAVING  
 - NOT THE ALFIE COLLINS SORT'

A sonnet by Alfie Collins (himself)

No! Not the Alfie Collins sort at all !  
 Let this disclaimer ring o'er Mendip's face  
 Through every swallet - every furthest place  
 And into every caver's lug'ole fall.  
 We talk of limestone. Witness now ye stones!  
 Though Alfie's verse be trivial, and lack  
 Nobility of thought, yet looking back  
 It rhymes, it scans, each verb a subject owns.  
 As limestone may to sight a jewel appear  
 When rearranged in crystal's ordered form  
 So prose may, by a process like, transform  
 To verse's equal lustre on the ear.  
 The muse must surely weep, I would suppose  
 When one man's verse becomes another's prose!

From THE VILLAGE INN by John Betjeman

'The Village Inn, the dear old inn,  
 So ancient, clean and free from sin,  
 True centre of our rural life  
 Where Hodge sits down beside his wife  
 And talks of Marx and nuclear fission  
 with all a rustic's intuition.  
 Ah, more than a church or school or hall,  
 The village inn's the heart of all.'  
 So spake the brewer's PRO.,  
 A man who really ought to know,  
 For he is paid for saying so.

And then he kindly gave to me  
 A lovely coloured booklet free  
 'Twas full of of prose that sang  
 the praise  
 Of coaching inns in Georgian days,  
 Showing how public-houses are  
 More modern than the motor car,  
 More English than the weald or wold  
 And almost equally as old,  
 And run for love and not for gold  
 Until I felt a filthy swine  
 For loathing beer and liking wine.

Have you been to the New Inn at Priddy lately ?

## CAVE FIGHTING FIT ON FOOD FOR OLD AGE

HENZ, the 57 varieties firm, have introduced number 58 - a range of four ready-to-serve canned meals. The new lines, steak, kidney and vegetable, Irish stew, beef and veg, and lamb and veg, are aimed at Old Age Pensioners and people who live alone but they sound ideal for caving rations - either for the cottage or for emergencies.

Price 10p each, these Dinners-for-one will be sold initially only by Chemists.

Other club news

SUBSCRIPTIONS are due now for 1971. A form is enclosed which please complete and send-off if you have not already paid. If you would like to take advantage of the new covenant system (no religious significance) please contact Ron Saunders or Pete Mathews.

COTTAGE DWELLING IN 1970 has been analysed below. It is emphasised that these figures bear no relation to caving. The figures are in bed/nights :

28, John MacMillan and Pete Mathews, 25 Bill Jones, 23 Phil Ingold, 20 Greg Smith, 18, Tony Buchan, 17 John Miriam and Bernard Reeves, 16 Roger Wallington, 14 John Evans, Pete and Joan Goddard, 13 Sion Hookins, 12 Alan Wicks, 11 John Sheahan, Simon and Val Knight.

## DON'T LEAVE A COLD GLOOMY WELCOME BEHIND YOU

It proves difficult to cook at the cottage if there is no calor gas in the cylinders and lighting a fire is greatly aided by having some dry sticks left for you by someone the previous week. Gas cylinders can be exchanged at Whittings in Wells or at the Post Office (Saunders) in West Harptree. Wood, we believe can often be found on, under or around trees; these are recognisable by their distinctive features and their brownny-greeny-yellow colour.

Dishcloths at the MCG cottage can also be usually recognised by their brownny-greeny-yellow colour. This, it is believed, can be remedied by either boiling them in detergent at the cottage or taking them home and washing them. Afterwards return them to a committee member.

Mattresses (SINGLE ONLY) are also required.

## PLANS FOR AN MCG CAVING LOG

PETE Mathews is hoping to compile a complete caving log of Group activities in 1971 for publication. He would like a brief report of all trips - Mendip and elsewhere - interesting trips will get more space but all trips will get a mention.

He would like: Date, names of party, length of trip, tackle used, surveys, sketches etc - also 10" x 8" black and white photographs printed on unglazed paper.

## TWO SLIDE SHOWS TO BE HELD AT BRENTFORD

Two slide shows are planned at the Royal Oak, Brentford : On February 4 slides taken by Pete, Ken and Don of their 1968 Czecho-Slovakian expedition will be shown.

On February 11 slides of the 1970 Polish trip - don't miss the Tatra Mountains, salt mines and a concentration camp. Previews at 155 Radcliffe Way, Northolt, on February 2 and 8. Slides, 'spotted' top right as they go in the projector and marked with your initials to Pete Mathews, please.

## CAVE WITHOUT CARBIDE

THERE is temporarily no carbide available at the cottage, although more is on order

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

There are four prospective members interested in the MCG :

Len Eley, 45 Buckingham Avenue, Feltham; Wayne Hiscon, 80 Raleigh Rd Southall; John Pudduck, 172 Ash Grove, Heston; David Stanford, 7 Rookery Drive, Nantwich, Drive.

John and Wayne run a folk club at the Crown and Sceptre, Feltham on Wednesday evenings from 8.30 and a number of MCG members support them.

## THANKS GREG AND OTHERS

The librarian thanks Greg Smith and others for the donation of a number of books and surveys about Polish caves.

## WANTED

The library is missing issues 1 to 6 of the Speleologist and Joan Goddard would appreciate any offers of them. She is also missing from her personal collection issue no 5 of Descent and is prepared to offer actual money for one.

## CHRISTMAS CHEER FROM JOAN

A reliably reported quote from Joan: "Let's all sleep together"

RECORD TURNOUT FOR NOVEMBER RESCUE PRACTICE  
BUT PITY THE POOR OLD VICTIM by Bill Jones

THERE was a record turnout for the November rescue practice when it too 2½ hours to extract the victim, Greg Smith, from GB cave.

Bob Craig, the MRO observer was quickly put to work explaining a method of securely tying the victim to the stretcher. Although Greg did not slide off the bottom of the stretcher, he did complain of being throttled on the first steep slope.

The technique of carrying the victim on a caver's back again proved successful and the distance from the ladder dig to the squeeze was covered with only one incident. This occurred on a steep slope when the rope around the drag stretcher (to which the hauling rope was attached) parted leaving the victim supported only by friction and would-be-rescuers several feet from the floor.

While the short pitch and squeeze were being rigged, Bob Craig explained a method of attaching the hauling rope to the stretcher for use on a pitch to ensure that most of the victim's weight is supported at his waist rather than his neck. With the rope attached, the victim was hauled to the head of the pitch and into the squeeze. To my surprise this section of the cave was completed quickly and efficiently as was the remaining steep narrow crawl to the entrance.

Although equipment for the transit of the victim through the cave - ropes, pulleys etc - was plentiful, equipment for his care and protection was certainly lacking. Goggles, a scarf, blankets for a dry cave or a goon suit for a wet cave would be very useful. A stretcher suitable for people other than pygmies (sorry, Greg) would also be a useful addition to our rescue equipment - particularly for overseas meets.

DECEMBER WELSH MEET RESCUED CAR FROM RAILWAY  
STATION AND WENT CAVING John Miriam and Joan  
Goddard

SOME EIGHT MCG members stayed at the South Wales cottage over the weekend December 12/13 and the earlier arrivals helped to rescue a new Ford Zodiac parked on Penwyllt station - one end on the platform the other on what used to be the track. It was 0100 before brute strength fortified by lots of beer restored the car to a level position. How the car arrived there is a mystery, fog or phantoms?

OFD AND PORTH-YR-OGOF VISITED (Joan Goddard)

Five people visited OFD 1, scrambled up to Roundabout Chamber and the Waterfall series. A small party of chickens looked at Porth-yr-Ogof.

## DOWN THE LONE WELSH POT

John Miriam &amp; Allan Wicks

ON SUNDAY morning John MacMillan stirred from his sleep and managed to rouse four MCG "tigers" (as Joan describes them - more like "paper tigers, we suspect !) On the way up to Pwll Dwlln - reputed to be Wales's only pot- we picked up one more enthusiast, Vivian Beedle.

The first pitch, a rocky 25ft on to a wide ledge, was easy, the second, of 45ft started against rocky wall then swung free with an annoying drip down the centre (who was that -Ed?) A low rift with a sandy bottom led to the third 30ft pitch. A small rift 10 ft from the bottom led to fourth and best 70ft pitch - easy to climb with the stream reappearing half way down to provide a refreshing spray.

From the foot of this pitch a couple of small climbs and clammers over loose boulders led to the final pitch where care was needed - especially as a fair size boulder slipped several feet downwards towards the head of the pitch.

A bedrock belay was found for the final drop where 50ft of ladder led to the final sump. In contrast to the scum and filth of Yorkshire pots, the water here was crystal clear. (Could this be because it takes so long to get to the pot and it's so difficult to find that it is rarely visited ?-Ed)

The trip took some six hours and showed that if Pen-y-Ghent is to be attempted in the summer we shall have to be quicker at lifelining and laddering pitches. However, speed was not the prime object of this exercise which we thought rated as one of Wales's most worthwhile speleological playgrounds.

We did, incidentally take lots of care not to disturb any of the boulder artistry and one has to look for belays on convenient bouldifloria as there are no rawlbats.

## MAKE A DATE NOW FOR THE ANNUAL DINNER AND GENERAL MEETING

THE ANNUAL general meeting of the Group will be held on Saturday, March 27, 1971, at the cottage, Nordrach-on-Mendip. Secretary Pete Mathews will be issuing formal notices, but he will want nominations for the committee and proposals for amendments to the C&R by the end of February.

The annual dinner will be held on the same Saturday evening at the Star. at Wells. Tickets and details will be available shortly.

## MOUSE-EARED BATS IN SECRET SUSSEX HIDEOUT

A COLONY of mouse-eared bats, half as big again as the native British bat is living in an underground tunnel in Sussex. The two men who found them, Major W.A. Phillips and Michael Blackmore, are keeping their location secret to protect them from 'collectors'.

The mouse-eared bats, found only once before in Britain - in Dorset in 1956 - are being ringed to discover if they have settled here or if they are only visiting.

## SUMMER 1971 - SEARCH FOR CAVES CLOSE TO A ROAD

IN SEARCHING for a venue for the MCG's summer expedition, Pete Mathews says that he would like to go to a place where caves are conveniently close to the road. 'He has had enough of panting up and down mountains to go underground'.

He has in mind Jugoslavia at present and anyone interested is invited to give his name to Pete.

## ALL OUR CHRISTMASSES

Joan Goddard &amp; Pete Mathews

SOME TEN members Christmased on Mendip - five participating in a fine Christmas lunch at the Crown in Wells. Caving was at an expected zero (like the temperature) but snow did not prevent extensive surface surveying for pubs and cottages and the like and pubs were always found. The cottage log read ... 'Got ddrunk, went walkies, got drunk, fell down, got up fell down immed...'

Quotable quotes include: 'Oi think oi'll have a tomato juice' (Zot) and 'A pint of Guinness and Bitter - and a packet of dolly mixtures' (Pat).

COMMITTEE

SECRETARY Pete Mathews, 155 Radcliffe Way, Northolt  
 TREASURER Ron Saunders, 21 Rusmoor Avenue, Hazlemere, Bucks  
 COTT WARDEN Tony Buchan, 80 Rectory Lane, Long Ditton, Surrey  
 MEET SEC John MacMillan, 31 Little Reeves Avenue, Amersham, Bucks  
 RECORDER Joan Goddard, 24 Swan Close, Hanworth, Middx  
 TACKLEMASTER John Miriam. Temporarily obtain tackle from Phil Ingold, 328 Carr Road, Northolt, Middx.

The Editor welcomes newsletter copy preferably written on one side of paper

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